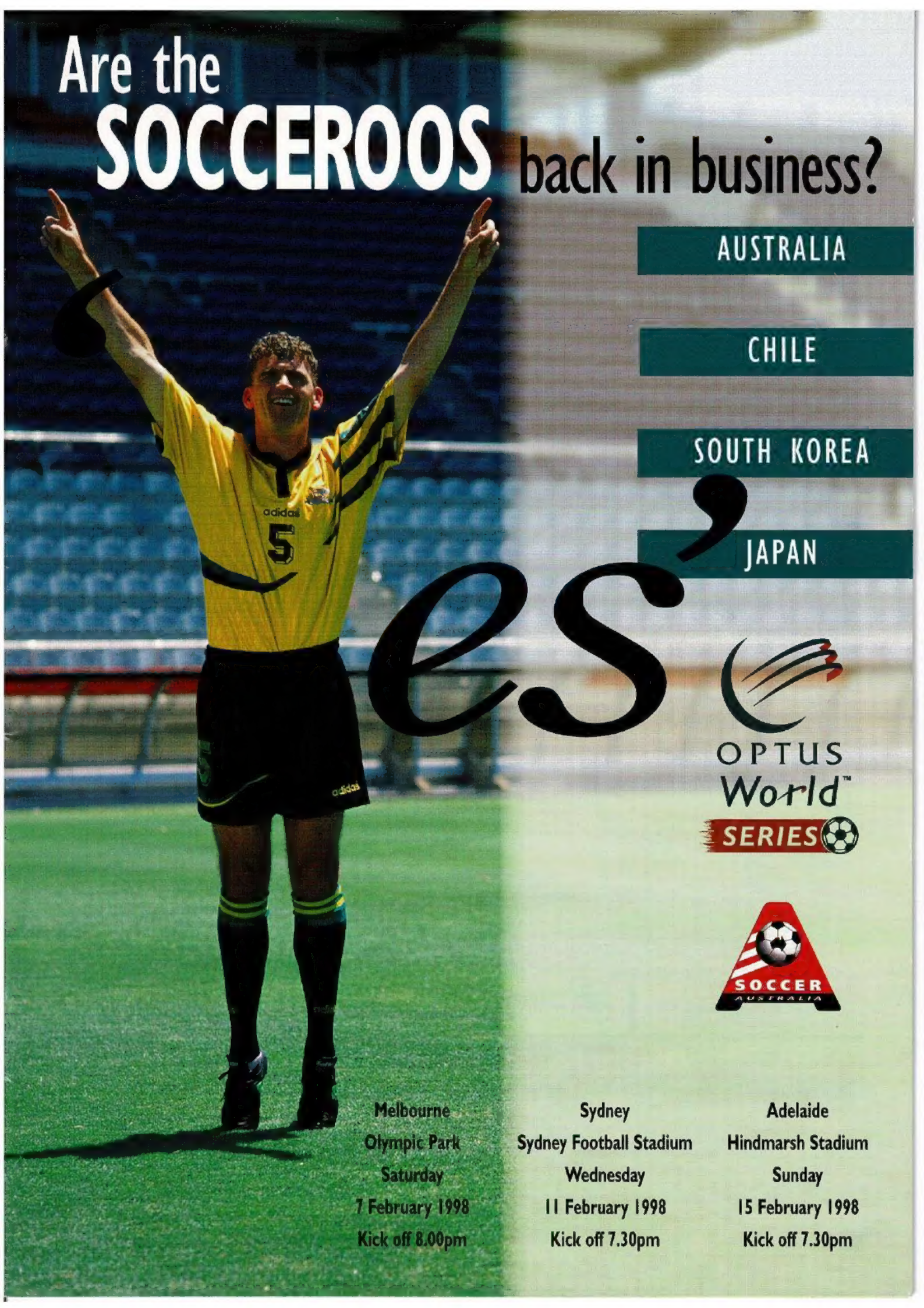
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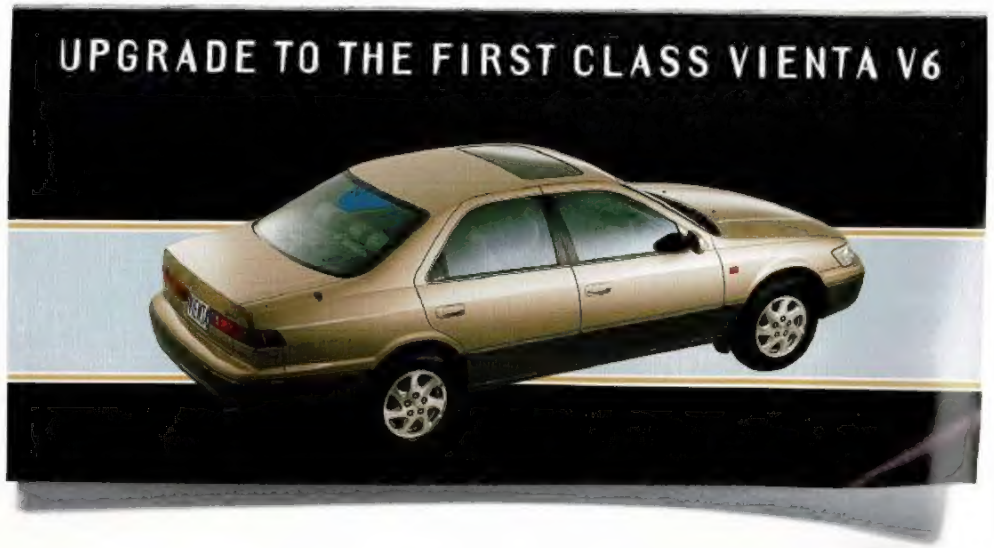
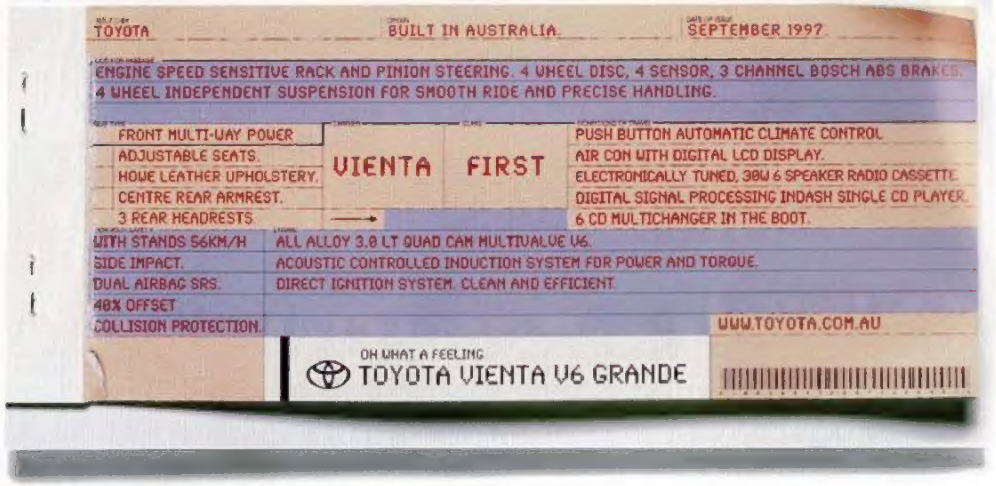
Sydney
Sydney Football Stadium
Wednesday
11 February 1998
Kick off 7.30pm
Adelaide
Hindmarsh Stadium
Sunday
15 February 1998
Kick off 7.30pm





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Advertising Anthony Clark, Playbill / Showbill **Photography** Sporting Pix, Soccer Australia **Publisher** Playbill / Showbill

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OPTUS
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Message from Chris Anderson, *CEO Optus*

Optus Communications is proudly associated with many of Australia's major sporting events and has had a major commitment to Australian Soccer for several years.

The company's involvement with International Soccer will build on its association with the local Ericsson Cup competition.

Optus Chief Executive, Chris Anderson, said Optus is proud to strengthen its association with one of Australia's most popular sports.

"Optus is excited about the increasing prominence of Soccer in this country and we are proud to be supporting the **Optus World Series**.

"Soccer is a sport with great community appeal and Optus is eager to help Soccer Australia promote the sport through outlets such as **Optus World**, in suburbs and towns around Australia," Mr Anderson said.

Optus has opened over 120 **Optus World** stores nationally and they will play a major role in the promotion of Soccer to the community.

Optus Communications is widely acknowledged for its unswerving commitment to high quality products and excellent customer service, and **Optus World** customers can experience this first hand.

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Message from Soccer Australia

By DAVID HILL
Chairman, Soccer Australia

Soccer Australia is delighted to be able to present, in conjunction with Optus, the 1998 Optus World Series.

We also welcome all the players, delegates and officials from Chile, South Korea and Japan, and trust their stay in Australia is an enjoyable one.

It will be the second time that Australia has hosted this Series, once again demonstrating the ever-increasing profile of soccer in Soccer Australia is delighted to be able to present, in conjunction with Optus, the 1998 Optus World Series.this country.

Chile, South Korea and Japan, unlike Australia, have all qualified for the 1998 World Cup in France. However, the Socceroos, by competing against the very best in the world, will hopefully land a place in FIFA's top 25 soccer countries.

During the Confederations' Cup in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, the star-studded Australian team showed the world that they were a force to be reckoned with. The Optus World Series is another wonderful opportuxnity to put the Australian soccer team back on the sporting agenda.

The Optus World Series promises to be a soccer spectacle: South American outfit Chile will put Terry Venables and the Socceroos under a lot of pressure.

South Korea, arguably the number one Asian side, will be another tough test for the Socceroos. Arch rivals Japan and Australia will contest their match at the all-new Hindmarsh Stadium in Adelaide.

Enjoy the Optus World Series and the feast of soccer talent on show.

David Hill

Socceroos Set for New Journey

By PETER DESIRA
of the Herald Sun, Melbourne

THE OPTUS World Soccer Series is proving to be a significant milestone in Australia's journey towards gaining recognition and respect in the world game.

The first Optus World series held in 1997 heralded the arrival of world figure Terry Venables as the Socceroos' new coach.

The series, organised as a round-robin, saw El Tel's charges beat New Zealand, South Korea and Norway to win the tournament and has gone down as the start of Australia's longest unbeaten run in international soccer.

A lot of water has passed under the bridge since then, including Australia's near miss to make it to the 1998 World Cup finals and a heroic display in the Confederation Cup involving the champions of every region playing under FIFA's world umbrella.

The second series is being organised under a different format, doing away with the round-robin to concentrate on providing quality opposition as Australia embarks on a new journey.

Contrary to all the rumours, Terry Venables is still in charge of the Australian national team and he comes here with a new ambition in his sights.

"It's important always to approach something with a target in mind," Venables said in the lead-up to this series.

"Last year we went into the Optus World series aiming to win games to make the players feel good and gain confidence towards the World Cup qualifying campaign.

"We achieved a lot up to a point and we earned a lot of respect.

"Although we didn't get to the World Cup, I consider what we achieved in the Confederation Cup as an amazing feat and would rate us getting to the final against Brazil as good as anything I've been able to achieve in my coaching career.

"But now it's time to move forward and aim towards a rebuilding stage for the next objective.

"With that in mind, myself, Raul Blanco and Les Scheinflug are trying to open up our minds and get more players into the international arena.

"It wasn't the right thing to do to put in everybody new so we've ended up using a good solid base of experience for a start.

"We've also players who were on the fringe before and dipped into the Olympic squad.

"I did that with England's national team before when I brought in four young ones in Jamie Redknapp, Robbie Fowler, Sol Campbell and Nick Barmby. All of them became senior internationals fairly quickly.

"We purposely chose not to select our overseas based players.

"We have earned a lot of respect in getting the release of players and put fear into a lot of countries who initially took us very lightly.

"We took players away for international duty when they and their clubs didn't like it and I fell out with managers who are good friends of mine.

"Before this series, a lot of them were coming to me now asking me whether I'm taking their players.

"But at this point, it was better to be fair. We haven't got the World Cup coming up so this gives us a chance to open our minds to other players who have been performing in the Ericsson Cup.

"We've been speaking about them so now it's time for us to say 'Come on, let's have a look.'

"It's important to integrate the new with players who have already had some experience because the aim is to maintain a good level of play and control."

THE EXPERIENCE in the squad comes in the form of defenders Alex Tobin and Milan Ivanovic, and midfielder Ernie Tapai who all played a significant part in the past World Cup campaign.

Tobin captained the side and Ivanovic remains the country's most elegant sweeper even at the age of 37. Tapai announced his international retirement the day after the 2-2 draw with Iran but has since been talked out of the premature departure and is certain to play an important role in this series.

There is experience too in the goalkeeping department with Zeljko Kalac having 23 full internationals behind him despite the strong competition from Aston Villa's Mark Bosnich for the Number One spot.

And the Optus World series also provides an opportunity for South Melbourne captain Paul Trimboli who was in line to play a part in the qualifiers against Iran until he got injured.

Then there is Matthew Bingley, who starred in the Optus World series last year and will no doubt revel in the opportunity to prove his value in the attacking wingback role that Venables selected him in last time.

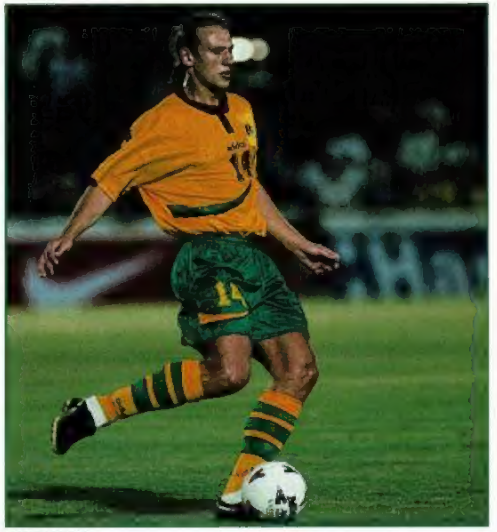
Bingley, now tied to Japanese club Vissel Kobe, is the only player tied to an overseas club in the squad — a significant point which proves how highly Venables rates him.

ALEX TOBIN

JOHN MARKOVSKI

FAUSTO DE AMICIS

BILL DAMIANOS


MARK BABIC

Robbie Hooker, who was another of the Australian based players in the World Cup qualifiers, is another with strong experience behind him. Hooker cemented his spot in a squad dominated by overseas based players with a strong showing in last year's Optus World series which included the winning goal against Norway, and he will thrive on the opportunity to continue to prove his value.

The young newcomers from Australia's Olympic squad are Brett Emerton of UTS Olympic and Bill Damianos of South Melbourne.

Venables has seen the pair on video tapes but there is no doubting that the major factor behind their selection is the recommendation from assistant coach Blanco, who is also the Olyroo coach.

Blanco doesn't hide the admiration he has for both.

"I admire their skills and their vision very much," Blanco said in reference to Emerton and Damianos.

"They have been playing consistently in the Ericsson Cup and both are a rare talent. It's a big step up for both but it's going to be a wonderful experience for them."

Other newcomers in the squad include Sydney United Paul Bilokapic and South Melbourne's reliable defender Fausto De Amicis.

Bilokapic has emerged from the shadows to lead Sydney United's strong drive at the top of the Ericsson Cup throughout the 1997-98 season to date.

De Amicis has long been considered amongst the best overlapping defenders in Australia and this series will finally reward him with the opportunity to don the green and gold of the Socceroos to cap a wonderful playing career.

Others making the step up from the fringe include John Markovski of Carlton, Gabriel Mendez of Marconi and Goran Lozanovski of South Melbourne.

Markovski, a star with the Young Socceroos and the Olyroos in the early eighties, got to make 15 appearances for the senior Socceroos but lost his way in 1996-97 ending up playing out the season as a discard on loan to Canberra Cosmos.

He has turned a complete new leaf since joining Carlton, losing over 20 kilos and emerging as the star in the Blues' entry into Australia's national competition.

"We all recognise Markovski as an incredible talent," Blanco said.

"Now that he is taking care of himself and is proving to be serious about the business, it was good to be able to re-open the doors to such a great talent."

Mendez was a player being sought by overseas clubs in Europe and South America until he suffered a broken leg but he has completely got over the mishap to star in Marconi's campaign this season and deserves his recall.

Lozanovski is another whose international career was hampered by injury last year. He is now in brilliant form for South Melbourne and was recommended to the national team by his club coach Ange Postecoglou.

The other significant inclusion is Abbas Saad, who completes a rags-to-riches story with his re-inclusion.

Saad, a former Young Socceroo, was the star and darling of Asian

GABRIEL MENDEZ

GORAN LOZANOVSKI

ABBAS SAAD

TROY HALPIN

Continued on page 32

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MISS? And then hekickedand heMissed.

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AUSTRALIA

MATTHEW BINGLEY
Position: Defender/Midfielder
D.O.B: 16-8-71
Place of birth: Sydney
Club: Vissel Kobe (Japan)
Previous clubs: St George BSC, Marconi-Fairfield
Full International Debut: 1993 against South Korea
International Appearances: 14
International Goals: 5

MARK BABIC
Position: Defender
D.O.B: 24.4.73
Club: Marconi-Fairfield
Previous Clubs: Sydney United
Full international Debut: 1997 against New Zealand
International Appearances: 3
International Goals 0

PAUL BILOKAPIC
Position: Defender/Midfielder
D.O.B: 8.8.76
Club: Sydney United
Previous Clubs: None
Full international Debut: N/A
International Appearances: 0
International Goals: 0

BILL DAMIANOS
Position: Midfielder
D.O.B: 18.4.77
Club: South Melbourne
Previous Clubs: None
Full international Debut: N/A
International Appearances: 0
International Goals: 0

FAUSTO DE AMICIS
Position: Defender
D.O.B: 26.6.68
Club: South Melbourne
Previous Clubs: Melbourne Zebras, Sunshine George Cross, Melbourne Knights
Full international Debut: N/A
International Appearances: 0
International Goals: 0

BRETT EMERTON
Position: Midfielder
D.O.B: 22.2.79
Club: UTS Olympic
Previous Clubs: None
Full international Debut: N/A
International Appearances: 0
International Goals: 0

TROY HALPIN
Position: Midfielder
D.O.B: 17.873
Club: Perth Glory
Previous Clubs: Wollongong Wolves, Newcastle Breakers
Full international Debut: N/A
International Appearances: 0
International Goals: 0

DOMINIC LONGO
Position: Defender
D.O.B: 23.8.70
Club: Marconi-Fairfield
Previous Clubs: A.I.S., Blacktown, St. George, Newcastle Breakers, Cercle Brugge
Full international Debut: 1993 against New Zealand
International Appearances: 5
International Goals: 0

GORAN LOZANOVSKI
Position: Midfielder
D.O.B: 11.1.74
Club: South Melbourne
Previous Clubs: Preston, Adelaide City, Collingwood Warriors
Full international Debut: 1996 against Japan
International Appearances: 5
International Goals: 0

JOHN MARKOVSKI
Position: Forward
D.O.B: 15.4.70
Club: Carlton Soccer Club
Previous Clubs: Sunshine George Cross, Preston, Melbourne Knights, Marconi-Fairfield, Gippsland Falcons, Canberra Cosmos
Full international Debut: 1994 against France
International Appearances: 15
International Goals: 1

GABRIEL MENDEZ
Position: Midfield
D.O.B: 12.3.73
Club: Marconi-Fairfield
Previous Clubs: Marconi, Parramatta Eagles, SCN Admira Wacker (Austria), Parramatta Eagles
Full international Debut: 1994 against Kuwait
International Appearances: 5
International Goals: 0

SOCCEROOS AUSTRALIA

Player Profiles

JASON PETKOVIC
Position: Goalkeeper
D.O.B: 7.12.72
Club: Adelaide City
Previous Clubs Spearwood Dalmatinac
Full international Debut: 1995 against New Zealand
International Appearances: 4
International Goals: 0

ABBAS SAAD
Position: Forward
D.O.B: 1.12.67
Club: Sydney United
Previous Clubs: Sydney City, UTS Olympic, Singapore
Full international Debut: 1992 against Malaysia
International Appearances: 1
International Goals: 0

KRIS TRAJANOVSKI
Position: Forward
D.O.B: 19.2.72
Club: Adelaide City
Previous Clubs: Geelong, Sunshine George Cross, South Melbourne, A.I.S., Preston, South Chine (Hong Kong), Adelaide City, UTS Olympic
Full international Debut: 1996 against Kenya
International Appearances: 9
International Goals: 7

ROBBIE HOOKER
Position: Defender/Midfielder
D.O.B: 6-3-67
Place of birth: Sydney
Club: Sydney United
Previous clubs: Sydney City, UTS Olympic, West Adelaide
Full International Debut: 1990 against South Korea
International Appearances: 19
International Goals: 2

MILAN IVANOVIC
Position: Sweeper
D.O.B: 21-12-60
Place of birth: Sivac (Yugoslavia)
Club: Adelaide City
Previous clubs: Red Star Belgrade (Yugoslavia)
Full International Debut: 1991 against Czechoslovakia
International Appearances: 57
International Goals: 0

ZELJKO KALAC
Position: Goalkeeper
D.O.B: 16-12-72
Place of birth: Sydney
Club: Sydney United
Previous clubs: Sydney United, Leicester City (England)
Full International Debut: 1992 against Malaysia
International Appearances: 26
International Goals: 0

ERNIE TAPAI
Position: Midfielder
D.O.B: 14-2-67
Place of birth: Subotica (Yugoslavia)
Club: Perth Glory
Previous clubs: Morwell Falcons, Estoril (Portugal), Stoke City (England), Adelaide City, Collingwood Warriors
Full International Debut: 1990 against Indonesia
International Appearances: 33
International Goals: 5

ALEX TOBIN
Position: Defender
D.O.B: 3-11-65
Place of birth: Melbourne
Club: Adelaide City
Previous clubs: West Torrens Birkalla
Full International Debut: 1988 against Taiwan
International Appearances: 78
International Goals: 2

PAUL TRIMBOLI
Position: Forward
D.O.B: 25-2-69
Place of birth: Melbourne
Club: South Melbourne
Previous clubs: Brighton (Victoria), A.I.S, Sunshine George Cross
Full International Debut: 1988 against Fiji
International Appearances: 28
International Goals: 9

STAND-BY PLAYERS
LUKE CASSERLY (Marconi-Fairfield)
BOBBY DESPOTOVSKI (Perth Glory)
STEVE HORVAT (Hadjuk Split)
BRAD MALONEY (Marconi-Fairfield)
MICHAEL PETKOVIC (South Melbourne)

Opponents with Plenty to Prove

By PETER DESIRA
of the Herald Sun, Melbourne

SOCCER AUSTRALIA has lured three very strong opponents for the Socceroos in the second Optus World Series.

Chile qualified for the 1998 World Cup finals riding on the back of its two world renowned forwards, Ivan Zamorano and Marcelo Salas.

Despite missing several matches through injury and suspension, the pair scored 23 goals as Chile beat the odds to edge itself in the finals as South America's fourth best team ahead of more fancied nations Uruguay and Peru.

Zamorano, who plays for Inter in Italy, scored 12 goals, while Salas, who is with Argentinian giant River Plate, netted 11 as Chile ended up as the top scoring nation with 32 goals in the league featuring South America's nine nations.

Zamorano established himself as a world class striker by top scoring in the Spanish League before moving to Italy. Nicknamed Bam Bam, he lived up to the name, slamming his 12 goals in just 10 matches in the qualifiers.

Salas' nickname is Matador and he too is a prolific goal-scorer since starting his career with Temuco in Chile in 1992, he is now close to registering 150 goals despite still only being 23 years of age. He is already attracting a lot of attention from Europe and is expected to move there after the World Cup finals.

Chile qualified despite making a disastrous start to the campaign, managing to score a last minute equaliser for a face-saving 1-1 draw against Venezuela, which turned out to be the punching bag of the qualifiers, failing to win a single match.

Chile changed its coach at that stage sacking Xavier Azkargorta (who had taken Bolivia to the 1994 World Cup finals) and appointing Nelson Acosta, a naturalised Chilean born in Uruguay.

Chile suffered defeats to Colombia and Paraguay early on but steadied after that and climbed up the table to turn the last few matches into cliff hangers in the battle for the elusive fourth spot behind Argentina, Paraguay and Colombia.

Chile clinched the spot in the last game, beating Bolivia 3-0 to climb to 25 points to edge out Peru on goal difference.

Acosta ended up using 44 players in 16 qualifying games, but 18 of them were used only once or twice.

The coach remained unhappy with the squad, saying he will continue to pick new faces in the lead-up to the finals — younger players who he did not pick before because he did not have time to integrate newcomers in the qualifiers.

Chile has been playing a 4-3-1-2 system in which the two fullbacks join the attack at every opportunity and forwards who are required to get back to win the ball back when possession is lost.

Behind Zamorano and Salas, Chile has an exceptional defender in Javier Margas who was recently chosen by FIFA to play in the All-Star match which preceded the World Cup draw.

Acosta says that from the qualifiers only six are assured spots for the finals at this stage: goalkeeper Nelson Tapia, defenders Pedro Reyes and Margas, midfielder Luis Mussri, and strikers Zamorano and Salas.

Nelson Tapia, 31, plays for Universidad Catolica and is considered the best keeper in the Chilean league despite facing strong opposition from Marcelo Ramirez of Colo Colo.

Pedro Reyes, a central defender, hails from Colo Colo.

Luis Mussri is used as a libero both at Universidad de Chile and with the national team.

Coach Acosta has one major advantage over other South American qualifiers — nearly all the squad (with the exception of Zamorano and Salas) are domestically based with Chilean clubs making their availability far easier for training camps.

The inclusion of Zamorano and Salas for the game against the Socceroos in Melbourne provides the coach with the opportunity to try out his best side in preparation of the World Cup finals.

The Socceroos have met Chile twice, drawing 0-0 in Australia's only appearance in the World Cup finals in 1974, and then losing 0-3 in a match in Antofagasta when Zamorano scored two of the goals.

In the World Cup finals, Chile has been drawn in Group B with Italy, Austria and Cameroon.

Chile World Cup Campaign

02.06.96	Venezuela 1 Chile 1 *(Margas 90')*
06.07.96	Chile 4 Ecuador 1 *(Zamorano 21' 85' Salas 75' Estay 83')*
01.09.96	Colombia 4 Chile 1 *(Zamorano pen 55')*
09.10.96	Paraguay 2 Chile 1 *(Margas 22')*
12.11.96	Chile 1 Uruguay 0
15.12.96	Argentina 1 Chile 1 *(Cornejo 49')*
12.01.97	Peru 2 Chile 1 *(Zamorano 88')*
12.02.97	Bolivia 1 Chile 1 *(Gonzalez 45')*
30.4.97	Chile 6 Venezuela 0 *(Zamorano 19' 26' 31' 47' 85' Pedro Reyes 66')*
08.06.97	Ecuador 1 Chile 1 *(Salas 53')*
06.07.97	Chile 4 Colombia 1
20.07.97	Chile 2 Paraguay 1
20.08.97	Uruguay 1 Chile 0
10.09.97	Chile 1 Argentina 2 *(Salas 34')*
12.10.97	Chile 4 Peru 0
16.11.97	Chile 3 Bolivia 0

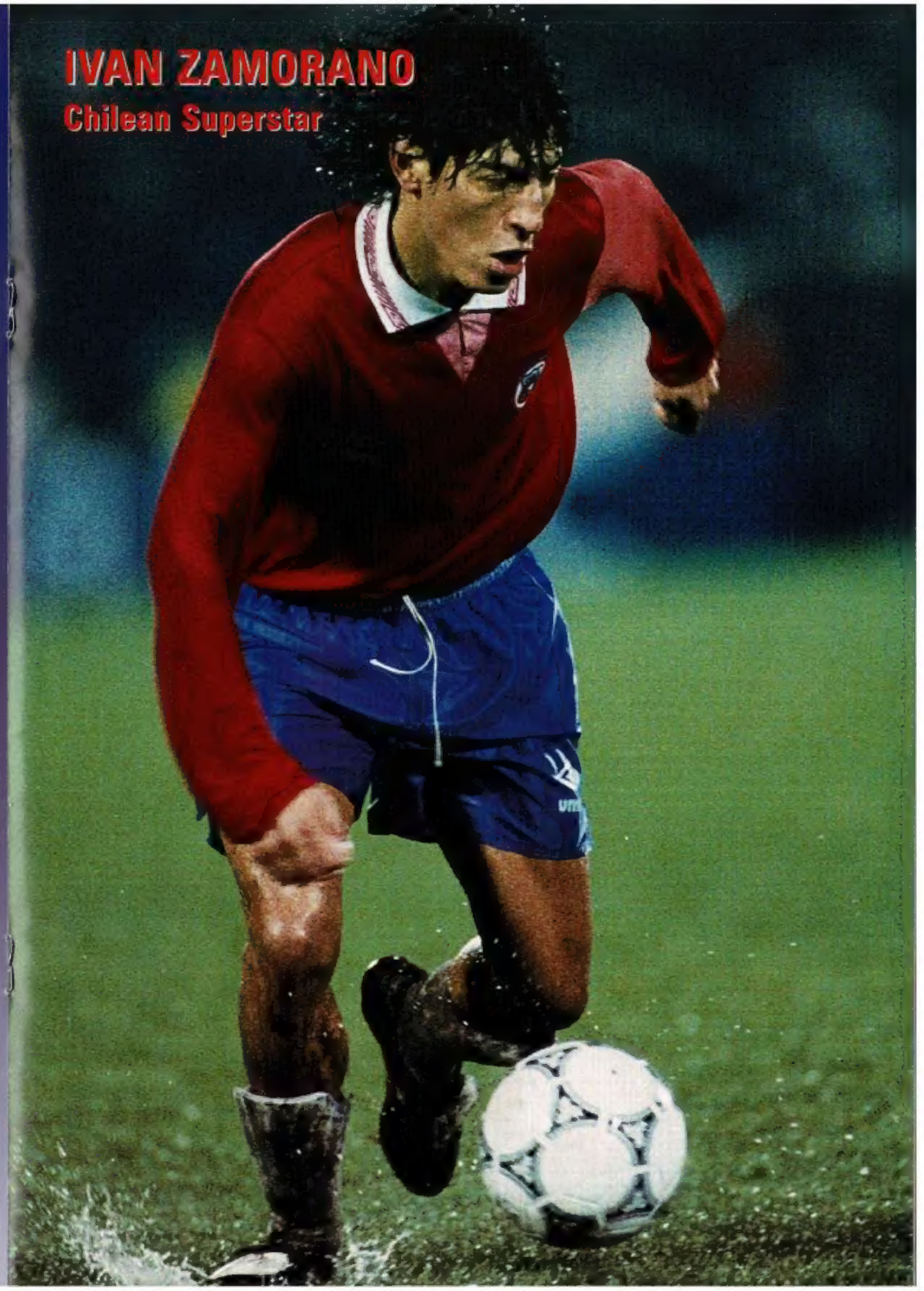
	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Argentina	16	8	6	2	23	13	30
Paraguay	16	9	2	5	21	14	29
Colombia	16	8	4	4	23	15	28
Chile	16	7	4	5	32	18	25
Peru	16	7	4	5	19	20	25
Ecuador	16	6	3	7	22	21	21
Uruguay	16	6	3	7	18	21	21
Bolivia	16	4	5	7	18	21	17
Venezuela	16	0	3	13	8	41	3

Players Used in Qualifiers

14 appearances: Tapia. 12: C. Castenada, Mussri, Salas. 11: Margas, Reyes. 10: Vega, Zamorano. 9: Fuentes, V. Castenada, Cornejo. 7: Acuna, Sierra. 6: Contreras, Miranda, Mora, Ponce, Valencia. 5: J. Gonzalez, Rozental. 4: Estay. 3: Chavarria, Goldberg, P. Gonzalez, Nunez, Rojas. 2: Barrera, Carreno, Mendoza, Paraguez, Ramirez, Riveros, Vergara. 1: Basay, Chong, Flores, Neza, Perez, Ramirez, Rivero, Romero, Ruiz, Vilches, Villaroel.

Goalscorers in qualifiers

12: Zamorano. 11: Salas. 2: Margas, Reyes. 1: Barrera, Carreno, Cornejo, Estay, P. Gonzalez



In South Korea's case what a difference a year makes. South Korea took part in the inaugural Optus World soccer series but arrived in Australia in total chaos having installed Cha Bum Kun as its new coach only five days before.

South Korea had fared disastrously in the Asian Cup, losing 2-6 to Iran in the quarter finals and disposed of its previous coach Park Jong-Hwan.

Cha Bum Kun remains South Korea's finest playing export having played in the German Bundesliga for 10 years with Eintracht and Leverkusen scoring 98 goals in 308 games.

He also featured in South Korea's World Cup finals appearance in 1986 in Mexico.

On his return to Korea he turned to coaching and was in charge of Ulsan Hyundai Horang for four years.

But he was plucked out of the obscurity of running his own junior soccer schools when he was appointed on January 8.

He made immediate wholesale changes in the squad, bringing 12 newcomers for the Optus World Series — and the side hasn't looked back since.

Under Cha's direction, South Korea's core strength remain fitness, speed and total commitment but has been seeing football through Bundesliga eyes.

After completing its commitments in Australia, Korea plunged into the World Cup qualifiers, winning its group against Hong Kong and Thailand to move into the Asian finals series involving the 10 group winners.

The South Koreans won five and drew one of their opening six games and made top spot in Group B a virtual formality to earn a spot among the 32 finalists in France later this year.

South Korea has now qualified for their fourth consecutive World Cup and fifth overall.

Cha Bum Kun's squad has built a young squad which includes seven members from the Olympic team.

Ko Jong-Soo is among the youngest in the squad at 19 and is expected to be a star attraction in France. In his attacking midfield role, he combines good passing with clever runs and also has a good repertoire of corner kicks from both sides.

Of the squad which toured here last year, there are six survivors — goalkeeper Kim Byung-Ji, defenders Lee Ki-Hyung, Kim Tae Young, Choi Young-Il and Yoo Sang-Chul, and midfielder Yoon Jong-Hwan.

South Korea World Cup Campaign

Asia. Round 1. Group 6.

23.2.97	Hong Kong 0 South Korea 2 *(Seo Jung-Won 61' Choi Moon-Sik 74')*
2.3.97	Thailand 1 South Korea 3 *(Roh Sang Rae 19' Ha Seok Ju 75' Kim Bong Soo 86')*
28.05.97	South Korea 4 Hong Kong 0 *(Yoo Sang-Chul pen 25' Choi Yong-Soo 40' 70' Park Kun-Ha 85')*
01.06.97	South Korea 0 Thailand 0

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
South Korea	4	3	1	0	9	1	10
Thailand	4	1	1	2	5	6	4
Hong Kong	4	1	0	3	3	10	3

Asia. Round 2 Group B

06.09.97	South Korea 3 Kazakhstan 0
12.09.97	South Korea 2 Uzbekistan 1 *(Choi Yong-Soo 15' Lee Sang-Yoon 87')*
28.09.97	Japan 1 South Korea 2 *(Seo Jung-Won 86' Lee Min-Sung 89')*
04.10.97	South Korea 3 United Arab Emirates 0 *(Ha Seok-Ju 7' Yoo Sang-Chul 72' Lee Sang-Yoon 84')*
11.10.97	Kazakhstan 1 South Korea 1 *(Choi Yong-Soo 3')*
18.10.97	Uzbekistan 1 South Korea 5 *(Choi Yong-Soo 19' 41' Yoo Sang Chul 38' Ko Jeong-Woon 58' Kim Do-Hoon 70')*
01.11.97	South Korea v Japan 0-2
09.11.97	United Arab Emirates v South Korea

Other Results in 1997. International Friendly

21.05.97	Japan 1 South Korea 1 *(Yoo Sang-Chul 56')*

Choi Yong-Soo, a 24 year old striker from the Sangmoo Army club, was South Korea's top scorer in the World Cup qualifiers.

South Korea's record against Australia is extremely impressive — prior to the Socceroos' 2-1 win last year in the Optus World soccer series, South Korea had gone through an unbeaten 13 year period in clashes against Australia.

In the World Cup finals, South Korea has been drawn in Group E with Mexico, Holland and Belgium.

Yoo Sang-Chul South Korea

Japan comes to Australia for the Optus World soccer series, swelling with pride after qualifying for the 1998 World Cup finals at the end of a traumatic year.

Japan won its initial Asian qualifying group but lost its way in the finals and sacked its coach Shu Kamo at a stage when it looked like it was falling out of the running for the runner up spot.

Takeshi Okada, who was Kamo's assistant, took over and proceeded to turn the campaign around with a confident 2-0 away win in South Korea and a 5-1 triumph over Kazakhstan at home to clinch the runner-up spot and a play-off against Iran for a spot in the finals.

Okada made a series of bold substitutions which paid dividends against Iran with a 3-2 win in extra time.

He started the game with two veteran forwards, Kazu Miura and Masashi Nakayama, and a goal from Nakayama gave Japan a 1-0 half time lead.

Iran fought back to lead 2-1 in the second half but then Okada played his cards. He unsettled the Iran defence by taking off the established strikers to send on two different style forwards in Shoji Jo and Wagner Lopes. Jo scored the equaliser to send the match into the sudden-death play-off.

Okada then sent on another striker in speedy Masayuki Okano and Okano broke away to net the winner.

All three goals were made by the youngest player on the pitch, Hidetoshi Nakata, but coach Okada was the one who received the hero's welcome when the team returned home to blanket media coverage.

Okada had emerged from the coaching staff at Jeff United but had never managed a club before. He is far from overawed, however, and he refused a contract with Japan's FA which would have taken him through to the 2002 World Cup. Instead he accepted one which lasts until July this year.

Kazu Miura Japan

Japan World Cup Campaign

Asia 1st Round. Group 4

23.03.97	Oman 0 Japan 1 (Omura 10')
25.03.97	Macao 0 Japan 10 *(Takagi 14' 33' 60' Ihara 43' Miura 53', pen 87' 90' Nanami 65' Morishima 78' 80')*
27.03.97	Nepal 0 Japan 6 *(Nanami 24' Takagi 50' 54' 60' Omura 72' Honga 89')*
22.06.97	Japan 10 Macao 0 *(Nakata 17' 61' Nishizawa 20' Nagami 41' Miura 23' 29' 44' 57' 62' 79')*
25.06.97	Japan 3 Nepal 0 *(Nishizawa 45' Miura 73' 87')*
28.06.97	Japan 1 Oman 1 *(Nakata 5')*

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Japan	6	6	0	0	31	1	18
Oman	6	4	1	1	14	2	13
Macao	6	1	1	4	3	18	4
Nepal	6	0	1	5	2	19	1

Asia 2nd Round. Group B

7.09.97	Japan 6 Uzbekistan 3 *(Kazu Miura 5' 24' 68' 81' Nakata 40' Jo 45')*
19.09.97	United Arab Emirates 0 Japan 0
28.09.97	Japan 1 South Korea 2 *(Motohiro Yamaguchi 58')*
04.10.97	Kazakhstan 1 Japan 1 *(Yukata Akita 22')*
11.10.97	Uzbekistan 1 Japan 1 *(Wagner Lopes 88')*
26.10.97	Japan 1 United Arab Emirates 1 *(Wagner Lopes 4')*
01.11.97	South Korea 0 Japan 2
08.11.97	Japan 5 Kazakhstan 1
16.11.97	Play-off. Japan 3 Iran 2 *(Nakayama, Jo, Okano)*

Other Results in 1997

Kings Cup Bangkok: Thailand 1 Japan 1 *(Shoji Jo 65')*. Rumania 1 Japan 1. Sweden 1 Japan 0 Japan 2 *(Kurosaki 65' Okano 86')* Rumania 0. Thailand 3 Japan 1 *(Kazu Miura 29')*

Kirin Cup: Japan 4 *(Hirano 35' Miura 49' 53' Morishima 89')* Croatia 3 Japan 1 *(Morishima 25')* Turkey 0

International Friendly: Japan 1 *(Miura pen 88')* South Korea 1

Okada has maintained he won't pick players on reputations and that only what they do on the field will make his mind up for final selections

He has nominated 29 players to vie for the 22 spots in the World Cup finals and the ones who get the opportunity in the Optus World soccer series against Australia know they have to use the opportunity to impress the supremo.

The well known names and the players who figured in the qualifiers are all here — Kazu Miura, the superstar striker who played in Italy, the emerging youngster Shoji Jo, the Brazilian born Wagner Lopes, and Hidetoshi Nakata, the midfielder who set up the three goals in the Iran play-off.

But there are newcomers too including Atsushi Yanagisawa, who was voted the J-League's rookie of the year after an outstanding first season with Kashima Antlers.

Japan and Australia played each other five times in the past four years and on their last visit here in 1996, they handed out a 4-1 drubbing to the Socceroos which sent shockwaves throughout Australia.

Okado will be planning for something similar this time around.

In the World Cup finals, Japan has been drawn in Group H with Argentina, Croatia and Jamaica.

VENABLES' MEN

SOCCEROOS 1997

																									Total
		W1-0	W2-1	W1-0	W1-0	W3-1	W13-0	W5-0	W6-2	W2-0	W3-0	W2-0	W3-0	D1-1	D1-1	W3-1	D0-0	L0-1	W1-0	L0-6	
		H	H	H	A	A	H	H	H	H	A	H	A	A	H	A	A	A	A	A	
		18/1	22/1	25/1	12/3	2/4	11/6	13/6	17/6	19/6	28/6	5/7	1/10	22/11	29/11	13/12	14/12	16/12	19/12	21/12	
		NEW ZEALAND	SOUTH KOREA	NORWAY	FYRO MACEDONIA	HUNGARY	SOLOMON ISLANDS	TAH TI	SOLOMON ISLANDS	TAH TI	NEW ZEALAND	NEW ZEALAND	TUNISIA	IRAN	IRAN	MEXICO	BRAZIL	SAUDI ARABIA	URUGUAY	BRAZIL	
1	JOHN ALOSI				×11		11			9	11	×11	×10			11	×11	×11		s	10 (6)
2	GRAHAM ARNOLD					×9		10	9		10	×10		s	s						7 (3)
3	MARK BABIC	4	5	5																	3
4	MATTHEW BINGLEY	s	×2	2				×6		×2			s				6			s	8 (4)
5	MARK BOSNICH				1		1			1	1	1		1	1		1	1	1	1	11 (1)
6	LUKE CASSERLY	s																			1
7	STEVE CORICA				×8																1
8	MEHMET DURAKOVIC				2																1
9	ALISTAIR EDWARDS		s																		1 (1)
10	ROBBIE ENES	s	×6	6				7	×8												5
11	JOHN FILAN					1															1
12	CRAIG FOSTER	7	8	8			7			7	7	7		8	8	7	7	8	6	7	14 (2)
13	AYTEK GENC	×8																			1
14	ROBBIE HOOKER	×6	7	7			s	×5		3			×6			s					8 (1)
15	STEVE HORVAT				6	5	4			5				4	4	2	2	2		×2	10
16	MILAN IVANOVIC	2	4	4				4	4		3	3	3				4	4	3	4	12
17	ŽELJKO KALAC	1	1	1				1					1			1					6
18	HARRY KEWELL												s	×11	11			s	9	10	6 (3)
19	GEORGE KULSCAR				4																1
20	STAN LAZARIDIS					3	×3	s	3		6	6		s	3	3	3	3	2	3	13
21	DOMINIC LONGO	s																			1
22	CRAIG MOORE							3		×4	×2	×2		2	×2						6
23	DAMIAN MORI				s		9		11	×11		s	s			s	s	×10			9 (6)
24	KEVIN MUSCAT					s		2	s				2						11	s	6 (1)
25	JASON PETKOVIC								1												1
26	TONY POPOVIC					6				6											2
27	JOSIP SKOKO				s	×7			×10				×7					×9	s		6
28	ROBBIE SLATER				7	2	×2		7		5	5	s	×7	×7	×6		7			11 (1)
29	WARREN SPINK	s	s	s																	3
30	ERNIE TAPAI	s	s	s				s	s	×2			s	s	s	s	s				11 (3)
31	DANNY TIATTO				s																1
32	ALEX TOBIN	×3	3	3			5		5	s	4	4	4	5	5	4	5	5	4	5	16
33	KRIS TRAJANOVSKI	×9	×9	×9				s	s	s											6
34	ROBERT TRAJKOVSKI		s																		1
35	PAUL TRIMBOLI	×10	×10	×10				11	s	6		s									6 (3)
36	AURELIO VIDMAR				10	10	10	×9	s	10	9	9	×9	×10	×10	×9	×9	s	×8	×9	16 (8)
37	TONY VIDMAR				3	4	6		6		s	s	5	3	s	10	10		10	×11	13
38	MARK VIDUKA				9	11							×11	9	9	×8	×8	s	7	c/s	10 (2)
39	DAVID ZDRILIC	11	11	11																	3
40	NED ZELIC				×5	8	8	8		8	8	8	8	6	6	5	6	6	5	6	15 (2)
	OWN GOALS																				(1)

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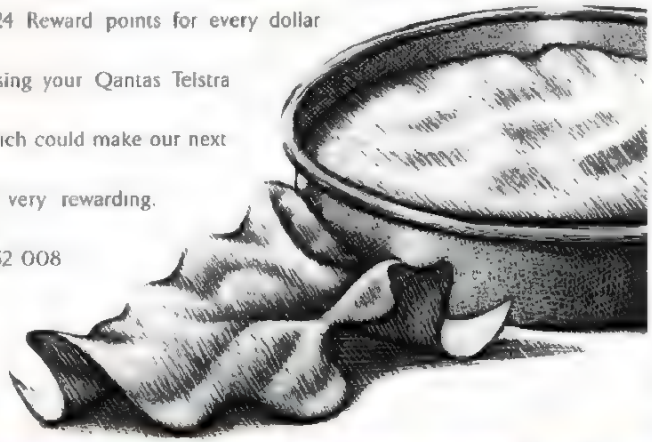

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JAPAN

Player Profiles

N. KOJIMA
Position: Goalkeeper
D.O.B: 17-1-66
Club: Bellmare Hiratsuka

H. OKANAKA
Position: Goalkeeper
D.O.B: 26-9-68
Club: Gamba Osaka

Y. KAWAGUCHI
Position: Goalkeeper
D.O.B: 15-8-75
Club: Yokohama Marinos

S. NARAZAKI
Position: Goalkeeper
D.O.B: 15-4-76
Club: Yokohama Flugels

M. IHARA
Position: Defender
D.O.B: 18-9-67
Club: Yokohama Marinos

N. OMURA
Position: Defender
D.O.B: 6-9-69
Club: Yokohama Marinos

Y. AKITA
Position: Defender
D.O.B: 6-8-70
Club: Kashima Antlers

T. NAKAMURA
Position: Defender
D.O.B: 10-6-71
Club: Verdy Kawasaki

N. SOMA
Position: Defender
D.O.B: 19-7-71
Club: Kashima Antlers

A. NARAHASHI
Position: Defender
D.O.B: 26-11-71
Club: Kashima Antlers

T. SAITO
Position: Defender
D.O.B: 20-4-73
Club: Shimizu S-Pulse

E. NAKANISHI
Position: Defender
D.O.B: 23-6-73
Club: JEF United Ichihara

H. SUZUKI
Position: Defender
D.O.B: 3-10-74
Club: Jubilo Iwata

T. KITAZAWA
Position: Midfielder
D.O.B: 10-8-68
Club: Verdy Kawasaki

M. YAMAGUCHI
Position: Midfielder
D.O.B: 29-1-69
Club: Yokohama Flugels

Y. HONDA
Position: Midfielder
D.O.B: 25-6-69
Club: Kashima Antlers

H. MORISHIMA
Position: Midfielder
D.O.B: 30-4-72
Club: Cerezo Osaka

H. NANAMI
Position: Midfielder
D.O.B: 28-11-72
Club: Jubilo Iwata

T. HATTORI
Position: Midfielder
D.O.B: 23-9-73
Club: Jubilo Iwata

T. MASUDA
Position: Midfielder
D.O.B: 25-12-73
Club: Koshima Antlers

T. HIRANO
Position: Midfielder
D.O.B: 17-7-74
Club: Nagoya Grampus Eight

H. NAKATA
Position: Midfielder
D.O.B: 22-1-77
Club: Bellmare Hiratsuka

S. NAKAMURA
Position: Midfielder
D.O.B: 24-6-78
Club: Yokohama Marinos

K. MIURA
Position: Forward
D.O.B: 26-1-67
Club: Verdy Kawasaki

M. NAKAYAMA
Position: Forward
D.O.B: 23-9-67
Club: Jubilo Iwata

W. LOPES
Position: Forward
D.O.B: 29-1-69
Club: Bellmare Hiratsuka

M. OKANO
Position: Forward
D.O.B: 25-7-72
Club: Urawa Red Diamonds

S. JO
Position: Forward
D.O.B: 17-6-75
Club: Yokohama Marinos

A. YANAGISAWA
Position: Forward
D.O.B: 27-5-77
Club: Kashima Antlers

Takeshi Okada - *Coach*

SOUTH KOREA
Player Profiles

KIM, BYUNG-JI
Position: Goalkeeper
D.O.B: 8-4-70
Club: Ulsan Hyundai

SEO, DONG-MUNG
Position: Goalkeeper
D.O.B: 4-5-74
Club: Sangmoo, Army

LEE, KI-HYUNG
Position: Defender
D.O.B: 28-9-74
Club: Suwon Samsung

CHOI, SUNG-YONG
Position: Defender
D.O.B: 25-12-75
Club: Sangmoo, Army

KIM, JUNG-HEOK
Position: Defender
D.O.B: 30-11-68
Club: Chunnam Dragons

KIM, HAK-CHOL
Position: Defender
D.O.B: 4-11-72
Club: Sangmoo, Army

KIM, TAE-YOUNG
Position: Defender
D.O.B: 8-11-70
Club: Chunnan Dragons

CHOI, YOUNG-II
Position: Defender
D.O.B: 25-4-66
Club: Pusan Daewoo

LEE, MIN-SUNG
Position: Defender
D.O.B: 23-6-73
Club: Pusan Daewoo

JANG, DAE-II
Position: Defender
D.O.B: 9-4-75
Club: Yonsei Univ.

YOO, SANG-CHUL
Position: Defender
D.O.B: 18-10-71
Club: Ulsan Hyundai

CHO, SAE-KWON
Position: Defender
D.O.B: 6-6-78
Club: Korea Univ.

YOON, JONG-HWAN
Position: Midfilder
D.O.B: 16-2-73
Club: Punchon SK

KO, JONG-SOO
Position: Midfielder
D.O.B: 30-10-78
Club: Suwon Samsung

LEE, SANG-YOON
Position: Midfielder
D.O.B: 10-4-69
Club: Chunan Ilhwa

YANG, HYUN-JUNG
Position: Midfielder
D.O.B: 25-7-77
Club: Dankook Univ.

SIN, BYOUNG-HO
Position: Midfielder
D.O.B: 26-4-77
Club: Koonkook Univ.

PARK, BYUNG- OO
Position: Midfielder
D.O.B: 5-10-77
Club: Hansung Univ.

SEO, DONG-WON
Position: Midfielder
D.O.B: 14-8-75
Club: Taejon Citizens

CHOI, YONG-SOO
Position: Striker
D.O.B: 10-9-73
Club: Sangmoo, Army

GWAK, KYUNG-KEUN
Position: Striker
D.O.B: 10-10-72
Club: Punchon SK

SUNG, HAN-SOO
Position: Striker
D.O.B: 27-3-76
Club. Yonsei Univ.

SUH, DONG-WON
Position: Striker
D.O.B: 12-12-73
Club: Ulsan Hyundai

JIN, SOON- IN
Position:S triker
D.O.B: 1-3-74
Club: Hallelujah

Bum Kun Cha - *Coach*

CHILE
Player Profiles

NELSON TAPIA
Position: Goalkeeper
D.O.B: 29-9-68
Club: Universidad Catolica

MARCELO RAMIREZ
Position:Goalkeeper
D.O.B: 29-5-65
Club: Colo Colo

FRANCISCO ROJAS
Position: Defender
D.O.B: 22-7-74
Club: Colo Colo

PEDRO REYES
Position: Defender
D.O.B: 13-11-72
Club: Colo Colo

RONALD FUENTES
Position: Defender
D.O.B: 22-6-69
Club: Universidad de Chile

JAVIER MARGAS
Position: Defender
D.O.B: 10-5-69
Club: Universidad Catolica

RAFAEL OLARRA
Position. Defender
D.O.B: 28-5-78
Club: Audax Italiano

PAOLO VIVAR
Position: Defender
D.O.B: 11-3-77
Club: Cobreloa

JORGE GOMEZ
Position: Defender
D.O.B: 14-9-68
Club: Temuco

LUIS FUENTES
Position: Defender
D.O.B: 14-8-71
Club: Coquimbo Unido

NELSON PARRAGUEZ
Position: Midfielder
D.O.B: 5-4-71
Club: Universidad Catolica

RODRIGO VALENZUELA
Position: Midfielder
D.O.B: 27-11-75
Club: America, Mexico

MOISES VILLARROEL
Position: Midfielder
D.O.B: 12-2-76
Club: Santiago Wanderers

MARCELO VEGA
Position: Midfielder
D.O.B: 12-8-71
Club: Santiago Wanderers

CLARENCE ACUNA
Position: Midfielder
D.O.B. 8-2-75
Club: Universidad de Chile

PABLO GALDAMES
Position: Midfielder
D.O.B: 26-6-74
Club: Universidad de Chile

FERNAND COBRELOA
Position. Midfielder
D.O.B: 28-1-69
Club: Cobreloa

JOSE LUIS SIERRA
Position: Midfielder
D.O.B: 6-12-68
Club: Colo Colo

JUAN CARRENO
Position: Striker
D.O.B: 16-11-68
Club: Deportes Concepcion

MANUEL NEIRA
Position. Striker
D.O.B: 12-10-77
Club: Colo Colo

CLAUDIO NUNEZ
Position. Striker
D.O.B: 16-10-75
Club. Nuevo Leon Mexico

RODRIGO BARRERA
Position. Striker
D.O.B 30-5-70
Club: Universidad de Chile

MARCELO SALAS
Position: Striker
D.O.B. 24-12-74
Club: River Plate, Argentina

IVAN ZAMORANO
Position: Striker
D.O.B: 18-1-67
Club: Inter Milan, Italy

Marcelo Salas

Record Beckons for Tobin

By PETER DESIRA
of the Herald Sun, Melbourne

ALL BEING WELL, Alex Tobin is set to become only the second player ever to play 80 full internationals for Australia during the Optus World soccer series.

Tobin goes into the series having pulled on the green and gold shirt 78 times since making his international debut in 1988.

During Terry Venables' reign as national coach, Tobin was not only elevated to captain but has been the most regular performer for El Tel as well — he has figured in 16 of the 19 matches Venables has had charge of as Socceroo coach.

Only Aurelio Vidmar can match Tobin's record, having played a part in the past 16 matches consecutively.

On that record, one would expect Tobin to play in all three matches of the Optus World series to surpass the 80 mark and move closer to the all-time record held by Paul Wade, who retired after playing 84 times for Australia.

Typical of Alex Tobin, the upcoming record is not something that overwhelms him.

"I wasn't even aware of it until Wadey himself pointed it out at the launch of the Optus World series," Tobin said.

"I had a rough idea of how many I had played but I wasn't aware I was coming that close and it wasn't something that I had thought too much about.

"Obviously I'll be pretty happy to reach such a milestone and I'm confident I can match or beat the record.

"I'm hoping that Soccer Australia will continue organising as many games as possible for the Socceroos — not for my benefit but for the good of the game generally and if that's the case, I'm pretty sure I can go close."

Alex Tobin's International Record for Australia

Appearances: 78 (105)

Goals: 2 (3)

Tobin made his international debut for Australia as a substitute against Swedish side IFK Gothenburg but it is his full international debut against Taiwan later that year that stands out in his memory.

"I was quite surprised to be sent on as a sub against Gothenburg because at that stage I imagined that I had been called up for the Socceroos only as a squad member — I didn't expect to play straight away," Tobin said.

"The only thing I remember from that game is that I was as nervous as I can ever remember for a game.

"The one that really sticks out in my mind was the full international debut against Taiwan two months later (in March 88).

"The game had extra significance because it was played in Adelaide my home town — and I ended up scoring on my full international debut.

"As a central defender, I don't score that many, so to get one then was extra special.

"It was an Olympic Games qualifier and it turned into a scary affair.

"Taiwan scored first and I equalised, then we seemed to have got on top and led 2-1 with an Oscar Crino goal but Taiwan scored an equaliser three minutes from the end. We got out of jail with a late goal by Jim Patikas."

Tobin started out with the Socceroos at left back before switching to the role everyone has got accustomed to seeing him in at centre back.

"I was playing leftback for Adelaide City at the time and that was the role Frank Arok used me in for a good six months.

"The position changed by circumstances — Adelaide City switched me to the centre and it just followed on in the Socceroos."

The 10 years of international representation has seen Tobin play in 78 full internationals as well as 27 others against club sides ranging from Milan to Borussia Dortmund.

In that time there is no doubting that the games that have stood out have been the World Cup campaigns.

"The games where there is most at stake are the ones that stand out. The games against Iran and Argentina are as close as we've come to the World Cup.

"They're also the games where we've had the biggest response from the Australian sporting public and that is always a highlight.

"Unfortunately we didn't get there in either situation but those two series remain the most memorable."

Tobin's elevation to captain was a lengthy process with the Adelaide stalwart filling in on a number of occasions while Paul Wade was in the twilight of his international career.

"Being totally honest, I don't remember the first game that I captained," Tobin admits.

"Wadey was in and out of the side while there was uncertainty about his future. It wasn't something I was rushing for — I was basically happy to be in the national team and playing at the highest level. Being made captain on top of that is always a bonus."

Tobin however does remember every goal he has scored.

"I've only got three in total, so they're not hard to remember. I scored one against Moscow Torpedo and the only other I've got in a full international was a penalty I converted against Kenya in the Simba Cup in South Africa."

When Terry Venables took over, there was speculation about the captaincy over whether Tobin or Aurelio Vidmar would get the nod. Venables opted for Tobin after giving both a chance to lead.

"The captaincy hasn't really changed too many things — once players have reached international level, they're unlikely to need that much motivating on the park.

"As a defender, I've always had to be somewhat vocal in organising, so from that point of view I don't think I've changed that much. Maybe I've become a bit louder perhaps but I'm not sure."

The extra demands that the captaincy carries are mainly off the pitch — most noticeably with media demands and being a link between the players and officialdom.

Leading Australia is a long way away from Tobin's beginnings in soccer.

The Adelaide stalwart does not come from a family with a soccer background and didn't start playing until he was 10 years old.

Tobin progressed from school football to club soccer joining Birkalla as a raw junior.

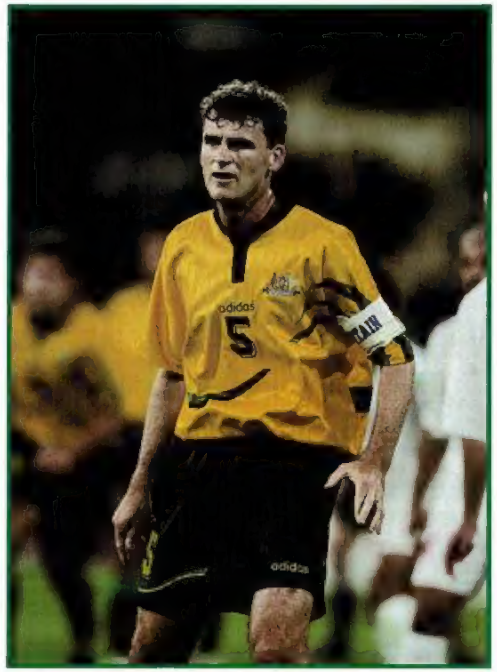
The Birkalla juniors included the likes of Tony Dorigo, who went on to play for Leeds and England, and Steve Maxwell, who was to play for many years alongside Tobin at Adelaide City as well as representing Australia.

Former FIFA referee Donald Campbell was Tobin's coach with Birkalla's Under 14s.

Adelaide City paid the princely price of $1000 to sign Tobin in 1984.

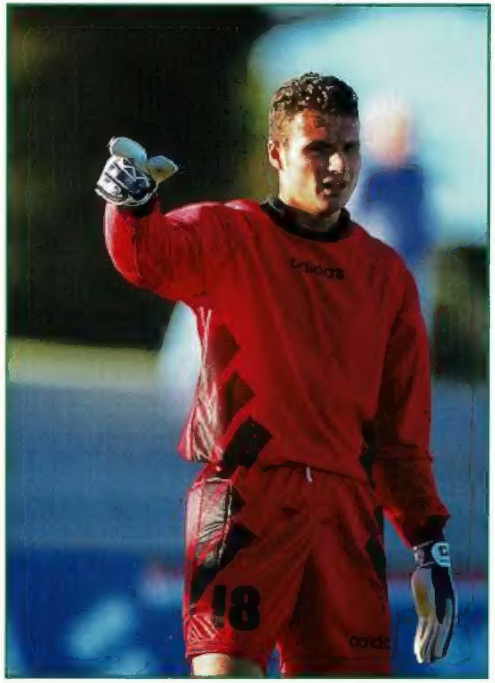
"Until Adelaide City approached me, I had not seen a national league game," Tobin says with his usual frankness.

That has certainly changed — he has now figured in over 360 league games for the Zebras and has the potential to challenge yet another record of the most number of Ericsson Cup games (445) held by his former Adelaide City teammate Sergio Melta.



ALEX TOBIN
in the World Cup Qualifier Australia v Iran (M.C.G.)

Continued from page 10



JASON PETKOVIC

soccer with his scoring feats in Singapore until falling out of grace with a one-year suspension when he was made the sacrificial lamb in Singapore and Malaysia's efforts of a clean-up campaign in bribery investigations.

Saad maintained his innocence throughout the investigations and the allegations against him were never proved leading to the ban being lifted. That has allowed him to play his way back into top form at Sydney United and his Socceroo call-up makes it a dream return to the international arena.

Since Australia's failure to hang on to a 2-0 lead against Iran in the World Cup qualifying decider in Melbourne in November, Venables has openly stated that the one factor that Australia lacks is the international experience at top level which hardens players towards achieving the required results.

"We've got to make sure we can control matches by learning to lift the tempo at times and slowing it down when required.

"What we do have is the problem of the four year gap between World Cups. In Europe and South America, there is the European Championship and the Copa America in between making it a two year cycle every time.

"We need the experience and the amount of competition to play on a more consistent basis."

Soccer Australia and chairman David Hill have promised to address that problem and are seeking entry by invitation to the Asian Cup similar to Mexico and USA who are members of Concacaf — FIFA's Northern and Central American region — but regularly compete in South America's Copa America.

The Optus World soccer series is another good international test.

The opposition that Soccer Australia has been able to lure for the series is of a high calibre — the three nations providing the Socceroos with opposition have qualified for the World Cup finals in France and are using the series as an important lead-up towards France.

Every player who is here from Chile, South Korea and Japan knows that he will be playing for a place in the 22 man squad going to France.

While most of the interest will be on the field, Venables' visit to Australia for the Optus World soccer series also provides Soccer Australia with the opportunity to sort out the coach's future with this country.

Since Australia's exit from the World Cup, Venables has been linked with a return to club management — invariably his name has popped up every time a managerial vacancy has occurred at a major club.

Glasgow Rangers, Liverpool, Everton and Chelsea are amongst the clubs supposedly interested in Venables.

"None of the noises being made are coming from me," Venables said.

"It's speculation that always occurs and I've learned to live with it.

"Everyone wants to know what I'm doing here (in England) and when they don't get a reply, they (the media) make their own guesses.

"It's their prerogative but I have one thing in my mind and that is the Optus series where I intend to do a good job.

"My contract with Soccer Australia runs to the end of the season (in June).

"I spoke to David Hill for a period of time during the Confederation Cup in Saudi Arabia and we said we would talk again in Australia, so that will be on the table while I'm here.

"I would like to continue (as Socceroo coach). We both know there are problems but we now have to see if we can sort them out."

So what would persuade Venables to continue in charge of the Socceroos?

"David Hill is the one who persuaded me the last time," Venables said.

"I'm in a situation where I feel we've made great improvement and I'm delighted with the work the players have done.

"What we do have is the problem of four years to the World Cup and that is one of the things I have to speak to David Hill about."

Australia's results since Venables took over in January 1997 were: 1-0 v New Zealand, 2-1 v South Korea, 1-0 v Norway, 1-0 v Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, 3-1 v Hungary, 13-0 v Solomon Islands, 5-0 v Tahiti, 6-2 v Solomon Islands, 2-0 v Tahiti, 3-0 v New Zealand, 2-0 v New Zealand, 3-0 v Tunisia, 1-1 v Iran, 2-2 v Iran, 3-1 v Mexico, 0-0 v Brazil, 0-1 v Saudi Arabia, 1-0 v Uruguay, 0-6 v Brazil.

Venables had used 40 players during his reign before the start of the Optus World series: John Aloisi, Graham Arnold, Mark Babic, Matthew Bingley, Mark Bosnich, Luke Casserly, Steve Corica, Mehmet Durakovic, Alistair Edwards, Robbie Enes, John Filan, Craig Foster, Aytek Genc, Robbie Hooker, Steve Horvat, Milan Ivanovic, Zeljko Kalac, Harry Kewell, George Kulscar, Stan Lazaridis, Dominic Longo, Craig Moore, Damian Mori, Kevin Muscat, Jason Petkovic, Tony Popovic, Josip Skoko, Robbie Slater, Warren Spink, Ernie Tapai, Danny Tiatto, Alex Tobin, Kris Trajanovski, Robert Trajkovski, Paul Trimboli, Aurelio Vidmar, Tony Vidmar, Mark Viduka, David Zdrilic, Ned Zelic.

Hindmarsh Stadium Enters the World Stage

THE SOUTH Australian Government — in conjunction with the South Australian Soccer Federation — has just completed a $9.13 million overhaul of Hindmarsh Stadium, Adelaide's premier soccer facility.

The upgrade has given South Australia a high-quality venue, which will attract the world's leading soccer teams and stars.

The stadium now has a capacity of 15,000 spectators, with 5,400 covered seats.

Already, Adelaide has won the right to stage preliminary and qualifying rounds of the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games, guaranteeing seven matches.

With two teams in the national league — Adelaide City and the Adelaide Sharks — Adelaide is one of Australia's premier soccer cities. The project also includes an upgrade to both National League club and player facilities.

The Ambassador for Soccer in SA, Mrs Joan Hall, said the February 15 match between the Socceroos and Japan would give the Socceroos the chance to prove themselves against another World Cup qualifier, while showcasing extensions to Hindmarsh Stadium .

"The upgrade of Hindmarsh Stadium was a critical factor in helping South Australia lure this truly world-class event to Adelaide," Mrs Hall said.

"Apart from showing our new and vastly improved stadium to a huge national and international television audience, this match will show teams coming to Australia for the Sydney 2000 Olympics that we have a magnificent training venue.

"The game will also provide a sneak preview of the Olympic qualifying matches Hindmarsh Stadium is due to host during the 2000 event."

SASF General Manager, Mr Tony Farrugia, said hosting the match signalled Hindmarsh Stadium's arrival on the "world stage of soccer".

"This is a great win for us and is a pointer to the exciting times ahead for soccer in South Australia," Mr Farrugia said.

As part of the stadium's opening festivities, the SASF has arranged an extensive pre-match program, including a Legends Match, entertainment and a Women's National League Match. A sports dinner — with Socceroos coach Terry Venables as guest speaker — is being held on February 14.

A further $16.2 million will be invested on a second upgrade of new terraced seating around the ground.

The "new" Hindmarsh Stadium

Autographs

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